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A Comparison of Media Reports about Diplomatic Conflicts

A strategy to address territorial disputes beyond nationalism

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My research aims to address how professional journalists overcome the challenges of public pressures, especially when they are reporting complex stories which include very strong nationalistic viewpoints about diplomatic conflicts. Since I came up with the idea for my dissertation, the research has taken me on a long journey to discover a practical and pragmatic approach. I owe many people thanks for the support they gave me on my journey of discovery.

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Chapter 1

I . Research Background

1. Why I chose this topic: A Cyber War between South Korea and Japan

On 18th October 2012, Korean government officials visited Google and demanded a change to the name of Dokdo on its English-language internet map. In previous versions of the English map service, the Korean name Dokdo had been used to describe the islets. However, Google had quietly deleted the Korean address from its map service, and instead of that, replaced it with 'Liancourt Rocks', the name given to it in 1849 by French whalers.¹ Although South Korea protested against Google's new policy on the map service, Google refused to reconsider, claiming it was trying to be "neutral". As a result, Google maps label the islets 'Dokdo' when accessed from Korea, 'Takeshima' from Japan, and 'Liancourt Rocks' when accessed from other countries. It seemed that the internet technology companies had no intention of becoming involved in the diplomatic conflict between Korea and Japan over the islets. But there was a suspicion, raised by the Korean government, that Google and Apple considered the Japanese market as more important and compromised their policy in order not to offend the Japanese with the 'Dokdo' address on their smart mobile phones.

¹ The name Liancourt Rocks comes from the French whaling ship Liancourt. The people on the Liancourt made a map of the islands in 1849.

[Picture 1] Google change the name from Dokdo to Liancourt Rocks (2012)²



Google's new policy had touched a nerve in South Korea. Consequently, a number of outraged South Korean internet users, who felt upset by Google's decision, called the media and urged them to cover the story. Indeed, most South Korean media reported on the Google map issue, whereas the Japanese media also dealt with the same story but approached it in a more passive way. Two contrasting examples demonstrate how the media had different perspectives on the same issue:

S. Korea demands Google restores name of Dokdo on its Web mapping service

South Korea has demanded Google Inc. restore the name of Dokdo on its English-language Web mapping service, Google Maps, the foreign ministry said Thursday, denouncing a recent change of the name by the U.S. search giant as "unacceptable."

Google recently updated its Google Maps and replaced the name of Dokdo, a group of South Korean islets in the East Sea, with its Franco-English name, the Liancourt Rocks, although its Korean-language service retains the name of Dokdo.

<On 25th October 2012, Korea Times, South Korea> ³

²<https://www.google.com/maps/preview#!q=%EC%9A%B8%EB%A6%89%EA%B5%B0+%EB%8F%85%EB%8F%84%EB%A6%AC&data=!4m10!1m9!4m8!1m3!1d22651600!2d-95.677068!3d37.0625!3m2!1i1366!2i667!4f13.1>

³ http://121.78.129.100/www/news/nation/2013/05/120_123119.html

Apple joins Google in noting Japan's claim to islands

Apple Inc.'s online mapping service is to add the name "Takeshima" to islets claimed by both Japan and South Korea, after earlier marking the isles with only their Korean name for viewers in third-party countries.

The search-engine giant told Seoul and other parties that its map would name the isles as "Dokdo" for viewers in South Korea, "Takeshima" for those in Japan, and "Liancourt Rocks" for viewers elsewhere.

The South Korean side has lodged protests with both Apple and Google, demanding that they reverse the changes.

Japan's Foreign Ministry had petitioned Apple to use "Takeshima" for the islets, and is expected to request that it drop the label "Dokdo."

<On 2nd November 2012, The Asahi Shimbun, Japan> ⁴

2. The concept of objectivity

The objectivity norm has been the means employed by journalists to help convincing audiences that they deliver reliable and valid descriptions of reality. Needless to say, in the journalistic profession, objectivity is an essential cornerstone for unbiased reporting. However, some claim that media content is unavoidably coloured by political bias due to the political beliefs of the individual journalist (Patterson TE and Donsbach W, 1996) while others argue that journalists are constrained by their news organisations, whose political standpoints and beliefs are reflected in their media content. (Altschull JH, 1995) It is apparent that the concept of objectivity is quite broad so that journalists can adopt it in different ways in their daily practice. (Morten Skovsgaard, Erik Albak, Peter Bro and Claes de Vreese, 2013)

It was a unique event that Google Inc. and Apple Inc. removed the Korean name of Dokdo from some of their maps. However, the media in Korea and Japan had approached the issue in entirely different ways. From the Korean media's point of view, Google's decision was inappropriate because Dokdo has

⁴ http://ajw.asahi.com/article/asia/korean_peninsula/AJ201211020083

been under the control of Korea. Therefore, the focus of the content was that the South Korean government should protest against the policy of Google, whereas; the Japanese media tried to emphasize the trend that Apple Inc. also followed in Google's policy.

Janowitz (1975) made a distinction between the gatekeeper and the advocate, with the gatekeeper taking a more passive approach in his or her news selection compared with the advocate who takes a more active approach as a supporter of certain social groups through his/her news selection. The South Korean and Japanese media are more likely to take an advocate position when they cover complex stories which engage their audience's feelings of national pride or history.

This situation is also present in other territorial conflicts, for instance those between the UK and Argentina. Their dispute over the sovereignty of the 'Falkland/Malvinas' Islands was rekindled by the referendum on whether the islanders wanted to continue under British sovereignty or not. From 10th to 11th March 2013, residents of the 'Falkland/Malvinas' Islands voted overwhelmingly to remain a British Overseas Territory, which triggered more diplomatic tensions between two countries. The correlation between Dokdo and the Falklands/Malvinas issue is not exact; however, they have some historical similarities. Therefore, the diplomatic dispute between the UK and Argentina over the islands may be a useful point of comparison for the Dokdo issue.

3. The Aim of the Study

Based on the theoretical basis, media reports can affect people's perspective on diplomatic conflicts. By applying these theories in practice, the media has its own prisms through which they interpret certain issues such as the Dokdo/Takeshima and the Falklands/Malvinas conflicts, and makes people have different point of views according to these prisms. I had been thinking about the relationship between theories and practice, and had presumed that the media

approach towards conflict issues might be different in practice and the dynamics would influence peoples' perspectives in the real world. Hence, I thought that it might be worthwhile to compare the media perspectives on the issues from each side, and measure to what extent they are objective on territorial conflict issues. From this comparison, I would like to find out the ways how journalists try to be impartial when dealing with conflict issues in practice and how much editorial guidelines or regulations can help journalists gain objectivity.

The focus of the research is therefore on the pressures faced by journalists when covering stories like these which are strongly related to the perceived national and historical interests of a country. The research also strives to find the way how the media strikes a balance on news which covers in diplomatic conflicts. The study principally focuses on public broadcasters (PSBs) since they are largely expected to adhere to strict editorial guidelines to make sure that their reports remain within journalistic conventions such as neutrality, impartiality, balance and accuracy which are not strictly required of the newspaper press. Therefore, the study aims are to explore how the nationalist pride or history of territorial conflicts between countries influences the PSBs' bias, despite the existence of these journalistic codes.

To thoroughly research the pressures faced by journalists, the study addresses the following questions:

- 1) Is it possible for journalists to be impartial when they cover national - interest issues – and to what extent do government regulations or media guidelines support them?
- 2) What are the elements of pressure faced when public broadcast journalists cover territorial issues, and how can they overcome these pressures to establish a well-oriented media approach to diplomatic conflicts?

Methods:

- The hypotheses of research are studied by analysing the coverage of two key events: One is the former South Korean President Lee Myung-bak's visit to the Dokdo islets (10th August, 2012); the other is the referendum in the Falkland/Malvinas Islands on 10th and 11th March of 2013.
- The comparison was conducted through analysis of the media, especially broadcast news in each country, including South Korea and Japan, the United Kingdom and Argentina, which covered the diplomatic conflicts.
- In this research, during the period of specific events which were mentioned above, ten news articles were randomly collected from flagship news programmes of each public or state-run broadcaster in four countries: **KBS** in Korea, **NHK** in Japan, **BBC** in the UK, and **TV Pública** in Argentina.

[Chart 1] Programme and news items analysed ⁵

	KBS	NHK	BBC	TV Pública
Programme	NEWS 9	7 PM News	BBC 10 News	Vision 7
The number of News items	10	10	10	10
Issues	The former President's visit to Dokdo(10 th August,2012)		The Falkland/Las Malvinas referendum (10 th ~11 th March,2013)	
Time Period	7 th August~29 th September 2012		5 th March ~ 22 th March 2013	

- Each news item was analyzed according to the following points:
 1. Title of the report and general language used (for example if they always use the phrase 'Las Malvinas' without saying 'the Falklands')
 2. Use of non-neutral language, like descriptions of the referendum as 'illegal' or a 'PR exercise'
 3. Which points of views are included (for example, only the one-side perspective, not covering the other side's opinions)
 4. Which actors are included in each bulletin (for example, South Korean President Lee Myung-bak, Japanese Prime Minister Noda)

- ⁵ **KBS News 9** is a state flagship programme in South Korea <http://news.kbs.co.kr/news>
 - **BBC 10** is one of the main news programmes in the UK <http://www.bbc.co.uk>
 - **NHK 7PM News** is a flagship programme in Japan <http://www.nhk.or.jp>
 - **Vision 7** is a news programme, TV Pública is owned by Argentina government.
<http://www.TvPública.com.ar>

CHAPTER 2

THE DOKDO DISPUTE

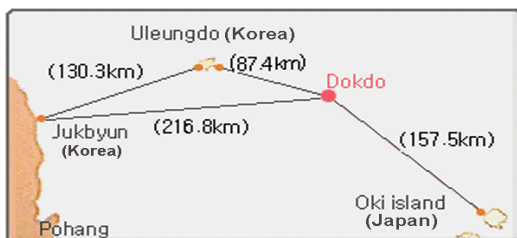
I . Geography of Dokdo

Dokdo is a collection of small islets, located in the south-eastern of Ulleung-island. (See Picture 2) Dokdo consists of two main volcanic rocks; called Seodo (Western Island) and Dongdo (Eastern Island). Altogether, there are about 90 small islets and some surrounding rocks in addition to the two main islets. The natural environment of Dokdo is plentiful. About 49 plant species, 107 bird species, and 93 insect species have been found to inhabit the island. ⁶



[Picture 2] Dokdo ⁷

Dokdo is 87.4 kilometres southeast of Ulleung Island and 160 kilometres from Japan. (See Picture 3) Korean maps made in the 16th century clearly show Dokdo as being part of Korean territory. However, Japan has also insisted that it discovered Dokdo, called Takeshima by the Japanese, for the first time in the 17th century, which has led to the long-standing dispute between Korea and Japan.



[Picture 3] Geographical Distance

⁶ Korea Development Institute. http://www.kdi.re.kr/infor/ep_view.jsp?num=81035

⁷ [Picture 2,3] Resource: Google image

II. The Historical Background to the Dokdo Dispute

1. Japan's Occupation of Dokdo

After the Russo-Japanese War⁸, which ended in 1905, Korea was colonized by Japan. Under the Japanese colonial policy, a series of agreements was forcibly made between 1905 and 1910. On 22 February 1905, Japan proclaimed that they had incorporated the Dokdo islets, now called 'Takeshima', within the Shimane Prefecture. For the Japanese empire at that time, Dokdo was a strategic location crucial in preventing Russia from expanding its power toward the East Asian countries.

However, following Japan's defeat in World War II, the Allied Forces took control of Korea from Japan and invalidated the Japanese claim on the Dokdo islets. The Supreme Commander for the Allied powers (SCAP) issued SCAPIN 677, which identified the Japanese territory and specifically excluded the disputed islets.⁹

⁸ **Russo-Japanese War**, (1904–05), was a military conflict in which a victorious Japan forced Russia to abandon its expansionist policy in the Far East, becoming the first Asian power in modern times to defeat a European power. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/514017/Russo-Japanese-War>

⁹ SKAPIN-677. Governmental and Administrative Separation of Certain Outlying Areas from Japan, dated 29 January, 1946

"...For the purpose of this directive, Japan is defined to include the four main islands of Japan (Hokkaido, Honshu, Kyushu and Shikoku) and the approximately 1,000 smaller adjacent islands, including the Tsushima islands and the Ryukyu (Nansei) Islands north of 30° North Latitude (Excluding Kuchinoshima Island); and excluding (a) Utsuryo (Ullung) Island, Liancourt Rocks (Dokdo Island) and Quelpart (Saishu or Cheju) Island, (b) the Ryukyu (Nansei) Islands south of 30° north Latitude (including Kuchinoshima Island), the Izu, etc."

This document did not represent a final decision regarding the attribution of Japanese sovereign territory, and the status of Dokdo was not addressed clearly in Article 2 of the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty, which forced Japan to recognize Korea's independence. Therefore, Japan has continued to assert that Dokdo rightfully belongs to their territory and ought to be returned.

2. Historical Perspectives on the ownership of Dokdo

For Korea, historically, it is beyond discussion that Dokdo belongs to Koreans; in addition, there is a fundamental, historical background which explains why Koreans believe they have a stronger claim than the Japanese to the Dokdo. Koreans have a strong emotional feeling when remembering the Japanese colonial occupation between 1905 and 1945. **'Han'** is the core sentiment among Koreans, which combines complex feelings such as resentment, regret, shame and humiliation.¹⁰ **'Han'** sometimes has influenced other areas of life; for example, Olympic or other sports competitions such as football or baseball between Korea and Japan; Koreans find it hard to tolerate when Korean teams are defeated by Japanese teams. Dokdo is also considered emotionally by Koreans as unfinished business with Japan. In this sense, Dokdo is a more complex issue for Koreans to resolve peacefully.

At the same time, Japan also has been using historical documentation to support its claim that Dokdo (called Takeshima, by the Japanese) is their territory.

"...In olden times Takeshima was known to the Japanese by the name of 'Matsushima' and regarded by them as a part of the territory of Japan and utilized by them in navigation and fishery. At the time of the Third Shogun Iyemitsu of the Tokigawa line, the Shogunate Government permitted two merchant families of Yonago, the Otanis and the Murakawas to have control over Takeshima, and the island was used as an intermediate anchorage for a voyage

¹⁰ Victor Cha, Georgetown University Lecture, 17 February, 2004

to Ulneungdo (in the 17th Century). Furthermore, fishing and hunting were engaged in by the Japanese on and around Takeshima.”¹¹

According to the Korean perspective, if Japan considers its claim lawful based on its occupation in 1905, then it must return all islands, including Dokdo, due to the stipulations of the Cairo conference.¹² From the Japanese point of view, Korea’s independence derives from the 1952 San Francisco Treaty stating that its territory included the islands of Jeju, Geomun and Ulleung, but it did not mention the Dokdo islands. Therefore, its omission must signify that the Dokdo islands should remain part of Japan.

Besides these historical claims, the natural resources of the sea have become increasingly important to both economies. South Korea and Japan are concerned with not only the ownership of Dokdo but also the economic interests in the surrounding waters. Dokdo Island is surrounded by plentiful fishing resources. Also, according to research, about 600 million tons of gas hydrates are deposited along the broad seabed around the islets. Both countries are keen on the natural resources because gas hydrate might be a next-generation energy source which can be made into liquid natural gas.¹³ Therefore, the two nations have a long-lasting dispute driven by the desire to gain the economic benefit from sovereignty over Dokdo.

3. Former South Korean President’s first visit to Dokdo (2012)

On 10 August 2012, the then South Korean President Lee Myung-bak made a landmark visit to the Dokdo islets in the East Sea. It was a symbolic trip such as no other President had made before. The former President’s visit was considered to send a message to reaffirm Korea’s sovereignty over its easternmost territory

¹¹ Views of the Japanese Government in Refutation of the Position Taken by the Korean Government in the Note of the Korean Mission in Japan, 9 September, 1953, concerning Territoriality over Takeshima.

¹² The territorial Dispute over Dokdo www.geocities.com/mlovmo/page4.html

¹³ <http://dokdo-research.com/page4.html>

not least because his visit was made five days ahead of Independence Day. Although the South Korean government explained that the purpose of the visit was to inspect efforts to protect the islet's environment, the visit was nevertheless controversial and public opinion in the two countries was split on broadly national lines. The Japanese government had earlier warned that the South Korean leader's plan to visit Dokdo would worsen ties between the two neighbors.

After the visit, Lee Myung-bak said Japan's Emperor- if he would like to visit South Korea- should apologize to the Koreans who sacrificed their lives in the struggle for independence from Japan. The words of the Former President were made before National Liberation Day, which touched a nerve in Japan. The Japanese government responded by taking the territorial dispute to the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Nonetheless, South Korea rejected the request from Former Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda to take the issue to the ICJ, claiming that Dokdo was its own territory historically, geographically and legally. The media gave significant coverage to this issue at that time since the diplomatic conflicts between two nations had been getting worse in the run-up to the Presidential election in South Korea which was held in December 2012.

CHAPTER 3

THE DISPUTE OVER THE FALKLANDS/MALVINAS

I . Geography of the Falklands/Malvinas Island

The Falklands/Las Malvinas islands are located in the South Atlantic Ocean, about 480 kilometres off the coast of Argentina, and 13,000 kilometres from mainland Britain. They consist of two main islands; East Island and West Island, together with about 700 smaller islands. Stanley is the capital city, located on East Island. The estimated population is about 3,000, primarily consisting of native



Islanders, the majority being of British descent. After the Falklands War, under the British Nationality Act of 1983, the islands are a self-governing overseas territory of the United Kingdom. The Islanders are legally British citizens whose predominant and official language is English.¹⁴ The cost of defending the Islands is currently met by the UK government, and estimated amount to 0.177% of the total of the UK defence budget annually. Beyond the cost of defence, the major economic activities include fishing, tourism, and sheep farming

[Picture 4] The Falklands/Malvinas¹⁵

with high-quality wool exports, and oil exploration. Oil exploration, licensed by the Falkland Islands Government, remains controversial as a result of maritime disputes with Argentina.¹⁶

¹⁴ <http://www.falklands.gov.fk>

¹⁵ <https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=the+falkland/malvinas+map>

II. The Historical Background of the Falklands/Malvinas Dispute

1. Falklands War

There is a dispute about who was the first pioneer on the Falkland Islands (or Las Malvinas as they are called by Argentinians). Several countries have claimed the islands' ownership since the first recorded landfall in 17th century. The first landing of the British did not occur until 1690 even though the first sighting is claimed by an English navigator, John Davis, in 1592. After that, claims to ownership of the islands were made by France, Spain, Portugal and Britain by 1766. Argentinians claim that the Argentine government inherited the islands from the Spanish crown in 1811. They also insist that the British left the Malvinas in 1774 and "remained silent for over 50 years".¹⁷ For its part, the UK asserted its claim to the islands by establishing a naval garrison there in 1833, and it has remained a British overseas territory until now.

The UK and Argentina discussed a potential change of sovereignty in 1960, but no settlement was reached because the Falklands' residents wanted to remain British. On 2nd April 1982, the Argentine military junta authorized the invasion of the islands. When the invasion took place, the Argentine government did not expect the British to respond in such a concerted way with a robust naval, air and ground offensive. After fierce fighting for seven weeks, the Argentine government surrendered on 14 June 1982 and withdrew their forces. During the war, 258 British soldiers were killed and 777 wounded. For Argentina, the war cost 649 killed and 1,068 wounded. However, though defeated by the British task force, Argentina has continually revived its claim to the islands.

¹⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Falkland_Islands

¹⁷ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-17045169>

2. Historical perspectives on Falkland/Malvinas

Historical, legal and geographical claims for the ownership between the UK and Argentina have resurfaced thirty years after the Falklands War. The UK maintains their sovereignty over the Falklands Islands, while Argentina claims that Las Malvinas, as mentioned above, which was controlled by the Spanish as part of the Argentine colony until 1810, became their territory when they achieved the independence from Spain.¹⁸ After its independence, according to the Argentine assertion, they inherited from Spain the exercise of judicial and administrative powers and created the political and military control of the islands.

Argentina's President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner is using diplomatic weapons to contest Britain's ownership of the islands; her supporters, not only Argentinians but also neighbouring countries such as Brazil and Chile, think that her approach is paying off. There is an instinctive condemnation in the continent of the remnants of colonialism, and a feeling that a European former imperial power has no business operating from a territory in the South Atlantic. Although there are critics who say that President Fernandez uses the conflict to hide other domestic economic problems, anger over the conflict lingers; it still hurts Argentinian national pride that they lost more than 600 soldiers' lives during the Falklands War. Argentina also argues that the decolonisation process most recently saw the return of British-ruled Hong Kong and Portuguese Macau to China in the 1990s and East Timor's independence from Indonesia in 2002. Therefore, it says, it is time that the Malvinas should be returned to them.

On the other hand, the UK bases its case on its long-term administration of the islands and on the principle of self-determination for the residents. The UK also points to its early settlement, reinforced by capital expenditure and formal claims to the land in the name of the crown in the 18th century. Therefore, the UK

¹⁸ National Security Council, Confidential Summary from the Director of Latin American Affairs at the National Security Council, Roger Fontaine's files

government insists that the Falklands islands have been continuously, peacefully and effectively inhabited and administered by Britain since 1833.

Besides the historical disputes, potential oil and gas around the islands have added to the tension. When a British oil exploration company began drilling at a spot north of the disputed area in 2010, it triggered Argentinians' anger against the UK. The areas around the Falkland Islands are said to contain one of the world's largest reserves of oil, mainly in the north basin, but also to the south and east of islands. The British Geological Survey estimates the oil at about 60 billion barrels. The hydrocarbons in the basins were discovered in 1998 by companies like Shell and Hess Corporation. But soon after oil prices fell to -\$12-15 a barrel- and with it ended the efforts to drill for oil until 2010.¹⁹

It is clear that oil has become a major issue at the heart of the conflict. The south Atlantic is – one of the last relatively unexplored continental shelves. The oil companies have been attracted to the region not only by the need to discover additional reserves, but also by the desirability of the geographical diversification of supplies. The Argentine government is aware that the Falkland islanders want to remain British, but does not want to give up a potential source of natural resources and a strategic shipping stopover.

¹⁹ <http://oil-price.net/en/articles/oil-war-in-falkland-islands.php>

CHAPTER 4

JOURNALISTIC CHALLENGES IN REPORTING

I . Pressures and Challenges to be Impartial

The objectivity norm pervades the news production process by guiding journalists when they select, gather, and present the news. At the same time, objectivity is an ambiguous concept that needs to be implemented by journalists in their work when decisions have to be made on a daily basis and under the pressures of intense public opinion. (Morten Skovsgaard, Erik Albak, Peter Bro and Claes de Vreese, 2012) This is especially, the case when covering conflicts which are deep and long-standing between two nations, which makes the journalists' aim of being objective very difficult. The origins and history of particular territorial conflict events are differently told by each side and quite often used to legitimise their own actions. Therefore, territorial conflicts are much more challenging compared to the other issues.

One of the very experienced South Korean journalists who requested anonymity before he agreed to be interviewed for this research noted how difficult it was objective when he wrote about the Dokdo issue:

"Even describing the physical reasons why certain events happened, I already had to be one-sided. The prior condition is – Dokdo is our territory. South Koreans are not interested in investigating the reasons why the Japanese claim the sovereignty over Dokdo. Instead of that, they do care about what the Japanese were saying and how their words were irritating. Consequently, the approach of South Korean journalists is different from that of the international journalists. From a third party's point of view, Dokdo is a disputed tiny rock and there is no clear evidence that could support the facts that Dokdo is Korean territory. However, as a South Korean journalist, I cannot take that view because Dokdo is believed to be a Korean territory geographically and under international law, from our perspectives." (Interview, 21st May 2013)

The pressures resulting from deeply held public belief can affect the circumstances within which journalists operate. Even though there is no government control, strong public opinion might be one of the key factors which is shaping a common consensus and making journalists self-censor.

Vladimir Hernandez, a former correspondent in Argentina and now a BBC Mundo journalist covering Latin American affairs in London, also noted these pressures when he covered the Falklands/Malvinas conflict, with its long complex history in which explanations are extremely contested:

“It is not uncommon to see youngsters in Argentina with tattoos of a Falklands map in the colours of the Argentine flag. For Argentinians in general, they are very keen on football but ‘Las Malvinas’ is probably the second most important issue in terms of foreign politics. It is such a high public pressure, therefore, the issue cannot be objective; the Argentine journalist frames this issue in this way in order to argue or defend that the islands is their territory.” (Interview, 14th May 2013)

II. Four elements affecting coverage

There are four specific elements which principally affect how news organisations explain and contextualise certain news events from a particular perspective. Mostly, these particular perspectives are used to structure news content and set out the public agenda.

1. Historical Background

Most Koreans have a strong feeling of anger towards Japan when they are reminded of the colonial period, in particular when thinking about Korea being brutally occupied by Japanese military forces. Korea’s historical claim to Dokdo is reinforced by the historical circumstances of Japan’s colonisation of Korea and the seizure of Dokdo. The Koreans’ anger is deeply rooted in Japan’s failure after

World War II to offer their sincere apology and compensation to the victims of the colonial era, such as forced labourers and comfort women. It is a natural feeling for Koreans to be deeply insulted if Dokdo is regarded as Japanese territory by Japanese government officers or extreme nationalists. That is because bitter memories of the cruel colonial era still exist among Koreans, and they see the Japanese' claims over Dokdo as a sign that Japan has not repented of its imperialist past. On the contrary, for the Japanese, Takeshima is an issue of territorial or economic interest relatively more than a historical matter.

As for the Argentinians, Las Malvinas has been interpreted in a similar way. The Latin American territorial disputes are mostly rooted after the end of Spanish colonisation in the nineteenth century, and the end of French and British colonisation in the twentieth century. According to the Argentine version, the islands were under Spanish rule and therefore the control of the Malvinas from Spain when they gained their independence in 1811. Argentinians claims that the British Empire's forces expelled Argentinians who lived there and took the islands.²⁰ Therefore, they feel that the historical background is on their side, and geographically, the islands are far closer to them than to Britain. Besides, the Falklands War provokes sympathy towards the Argentinian soldiers who lost their lives during the war as well as reminding the Argentinians of a shameful moment when they were defeated by the UK. – This emotion makes the Argentinians see the British as a colonial power even today.

2. Political / Public Influence

Propaganda campaigns have always been used by politicians during times of war or national crisis. The government is likely to take advantage of the national media in order to divert public attention away from its weaknesses, such as poor handling of economic recession, or a perceived lack of political legitimacy. The former President Lee Myung-bak wanted to assert effective rule of South Korea over Dokdo; therefore, he made a landmark visit to Dokdo on 10th August, 2012.

²⁰ <http://www.presstv.ir/detail/234653.html>

However, it is said that his real intention was to regain political momentum after a corruption scandal involving his elder brother. Equally, the Argentine President Fernandez also has been accused of using the Falklands/Malvinas dispute as propaganda to distract attention from domestic problems, such as high inflation.

Interestingly, even though voters may recognize the government's propaganda motives, they nevertheless strongly support the government once diplomatic conflicts are revived between the two nations. This public influence is a significant burden for journalists when they cover these sensational events. 9/11 was a good example of how public patriotism influenced the way the news was framed in the media. The climate of anger- as David Harvey (2003:191) described it as the rhetoric of a Christian crusade versus an Islamic jihad - demands revenge on the terrorists of 9/11. Zelizer and Allan said, "It has been observed that a shared sense of patriotism began shaping news coverage as journalists understandably became caught up in the nation's emotional desire to execute swift justice" (Zelizer and Allan 2002/2011). Less than a year after 11 September 2001, Dan Rather, a senior news anchor on CBS news, confessed that "patriotism run amok" had prevented the US journalists from being an effective watchdog towards the US government. This illustrates the media's dilemma when journalists are reporting such sensitive events as war or diplomatic conflicts; the reports are often influenced by populist and nationalistic politicians, interest groups or public pressures, and as a result, the news coverage can appear biased.

3. De Facto²¹

Island features generate 'pressure points' when they are strongly linked to strategic geography, such as issues relating to energy security between nations.

²¹ De facto is a Latin expression that means "in fact, whether by right or not" The *de facto* boundaries of a country are defined by the area that its government is actually able to enforce its laws in, and to defend against encroachments by other countries that may also claim the same territory *de jure*(by legal right).

This pressure influences each regional actor's response to regional dynamics. To start with the Dokdo islands, Korea asserts that there is no territorial dispute over the islands since Dokdo is under the control of the Korean government. Korea insists that Dokdo belongs historically and geographically to the Koreans since the islands have been occupied by South Korean government from 1954 in a peaceful and effective way. This is the reason why the Korean government most often underlines its 'de facto' control of Dokdo and maintains a comparatively 'silent diplomacy' strategy, unlike the more vocal Japan. Before the events surrounding the President's visit in 2012, the Korean government frequently asked South Korean journalists not to exaggerate the Dokdo issue in order to avoid diplomatic disputes over Dokdo. Indeed, despite the criticism of its long-held policy of silent diplomacy, the Korean media indeed refrained from covering the conflicts between two countries unless there were outstanding events happening such as the former President's visit to Dokdo.

Likewise, when China dispatched a marine surveillance plane into the airspace of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, the Chinese state newspaper, the Global Times declared triumphantly, "This marks another important step for China in safeguarding the sovereignty of the islands."²² On the contrary, the Japanese media mostly demanded a calm response and early settlement through peaceful dialogue between Japan and China. Currently, Japan is effectively controlling the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. Therefore, it is interesting to see how Japan approaches differently those two issues, regarding 'de facto'.

On the other hand, the Argentine media's approach over the Falklands/Malvinas is more emotional and aggressive compared to that of the British media, reflecting the fact that the islands are not controlled by Argentina. Therefore, when President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner and David Cameron engaged in a diplomatic war of words over the sovereignty of the islands, Argentinians media showed a biased tendency in order to support their

²² Ching, Frank(2012). China's high-risk plan "The Koreatimes"
http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/opinion/2012/12/171_127501.html

government's position by emphasizing its own country's legitimacy, describing the British actions over the islands in a negative tone.

4. Relationship with sources

There are considerable differences between the western media and both the Japanese and to some extent – the South Korean media- 'Kisha Kurabu' known as the Press Club in Japan is a central feature of Japanese journalism. Japanese journalists are able to get exclusive early access to news distributed by organizations such as the government, and companies. In order to earn this privileged access to information, Japanese media companies pay money to the Nihon Press Club. However, this Press Club is controversial; subject to public criticism that the news coverage is largely under the control of these organizations. The strong relationship between journalist members of Kisha Kurabu and their sources in these organisations sometimes results in biased coverage. They socialise with their sources and build up personal relationships, which can lead them to down-play, or even leave out opposition voices when they cover a story. In South Korea, journalists without press credentials are not allowed access to the government, institutions, and companies. Those who are accredited have monopolized all the information by severely restricting other journalists' access to the sources, and as a result, South Korean journalists have also been criticised for coverage that is flat and complacent. This kind of uniquely embedded system creates peer pressures on journalists who have different points of views on certain issues, which is quite different from the western media environment.

On the contrary, BBC journalists have far more editorial independence; they investigate events through contact with their sources to find more data or stories. By keeping a distance from those sources, BBC journalists are better able to take a balanced viewpoint, even when writing about sensitive issues.

TV Pública, by contrast, is not only fully financed by the government, but its coverage is very much more under state influence. It is therefore hard for journalists to take the role of a watchdog towards the government. They are more likely to have a strong relationship with government officials or politicians than other public broadcasting companies' journalists. Consequently, the news frames are usually in favor of government positions.

These four elements therefore lead to the following hypotheses in relation to the coverage of diplomatic and nationalistic disputes:

- The greater historical anger about a territorial issue, the more pressure is created on media impartiality.
- Journalists tend to be influenced by political or public pressures.
- A country which effectively controls certain islands is more likely to take a 'silent diplomacy' strategy; therefore, the media of the country tends to follow the government's policy.
- The relationship with journalists' sources is one of the main keys which decide the objectivity of the media.

III. How the Four Elements Affect Coverage in Practice

1. Case: Former South Korea President's First Visit to 'Dokdo'

(1) A Comparison of media coverage about the Islands in South Korea and Japan

When the Former President Lee-Myung bak visited the Dokdo Islands, two major public broadcasts, KBS in South Korea and NHK in Japan, reported the breaking news. The event was covered for a while after the visit, via not only news bulletins but also editorial news. These are the headlines of ten top stories covered by KBS and NHK during the period between 10th August and 26th September.

[Chart 1] The News Titles in KBS and NHK²³

Channel	Date (2012)	Headline
KBS	09/08	South Korea will research marine resources on the islet in order to claim territorial rights of Dokdo
	10/08	The South Korean President makes a historic Dokdo visit
	11/08	President; "Dokdo is a place worth to sacrifice our lives to defend"
	12/08	Japan set up an Agency to handle all territorial disputes... South Korea, 'No plan to respond to each of Japan's action
	13/08	President; "Dokdo is our territory"
	14/08	President; "Japanese Emperor must apologize about colonial history"
	15/08	CNN; 'South Korean singer swims into Dokdo Island'

²³ <http://news.kbs.co.kr/common/NewsMain.html>

<http://t21.nikkei.co.jp> * NHK News articles were collected from the Nikkei website since NHK did not provide a previous news service through NHK homepage.

	17/08	South Korean government, "We won't go to the ICJ"
	19/08	South Korea returns Japanese Prime Minister's a letter of regret
	20/08	Establishment of a boundary stone on Dokdo
NHK	10/08	The Takeshima Visit: South Korean President's anti-Japan stance gradually becoming more hard line as he aims to recover domestic momentum
	10/08	South Korean President's Takeshima visit: a series of visit by ministers and members of parliament asserting South Korea's territorial claims
	11/08	South Korean President's Takeshima visit: is he trying to recover his slumping approval rating and avoid any more loss of momentum?
	13/08	Comments on the current public debate: after the Takeshima visit, what now for Japan-Korea relations?
	16/08	Japan proposed for ROK to jointly take the issue to ICJ
	17/08	Prime Minister sent a letter of regret to MB
	18/08	Japan takes the islets issue to ICJ
	23/08	Japan-Korea relations in the 100 years since the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty
	27/08	Attitudes hardening on the Takeshima problem: Chief Cabinet Secretary to investigate setting up a specialist Post
	30/08	South Korea refuses Japan's request to jointly submit Dispute to ICJ: Foreign Minister says it is "extremely Disappointing" and that "we will take appropriate steps, Including going alone."

(2) Results and findings

1. Historical Background

When looking at actual coverage and real stories, the four elements identified in the hypotheses were broadly exemplified. NHK's reporting of President Lee Myung-bak's visit to Dokdo was neither extremely politically charged, aggressive toward South Korea, nor exhibiting a particularly strong bias. Rather, the reporting was quite analytical, placing his visit in the context of the political situation in South Korea at that time and the political goals that he hoped to achieve by this visit. As can be seen in the story quoted below, constant references were made to his loss of political momentum and his desire to recover that momentum in the short time left to him in office. Although the tone of NHK news stories was critical, their approach was nevertheless broadly rational, taking this issue as a territorial dispute rather than focusing on the historical background.

<10th August 2012, NHK news >

"On the 15th August, South Korea will commemorate its liberation from Japanese colonial rule and the visit of the President to Takeshima prior to this date is considered to be not only intended to appeal to national populist sentiment and thereby recover lost momentum, but also to suppress any power shift to the opposition party prior to the presidential elections."

On the other hand, KBS news highlighted the fact that the former President was the first ever South Korean leader to visit the territory. KBS delivered the President's words, and the reactions of Japan after the visit, based on facts and in an un-biased way. However, the President's words were very strong and critical of Japan's view of the region's history during World War II; consequently, KBS news seemed to be inevitably more emotional in comparison to the NHK news.

<10th August 2012, KBS news>

“The President’s visit, coming five days ahead of Independence Day, once again declared at home and abroad that the Dokdo islets are South Korea’s sovereign territory.”

“President Lee Myung-bak reportedly criticized Japan’s insincere awareness of history during his visit to the Dokdo islets Friday. In a phone interview with KBS on Monday, a senior presidential official quoted the president as saying during his trip that Japan should sincerely apologize for forcing Korean women to serve as sex slaves for Japanese soldiers during World War Two.

2. Political/Public Influence

The national interest stance was evident in the use of language such as “our territory Dokdo”, in the presentation of KBS news; by doing this, KBS could be seen as no longer being an independent observer. However, the ownership of Dokdo is not in dispute in Korea; it is a permanent truth among all Koreans that Dokdo is Korean territory. This strong belief places journalists in a difficult situation when they cover the Dokdo story from a third party’s point of view since most Koreans would not be pleased to see any suggestion that ‘Dokdo is still in dispute’ in the media. Generally speaking, most Korean journalists have a sense that they are all in the same boat, and they are therefore less critical about the government policy on Dokdo. In the same manner, KBS journalists also reflected the public anger in their reports when Japan provoked the islands issues.

<21nd August, 2012, KBS news>

The government has expressed regret over Japan’s proposal to send the Dokdo issue to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), urging Tokyo to immediately halt groundless claims over the islets. Foreign Ministry spokesman Cho Tae-young told a regular news briefing that the Dokdo islets are South Korea’s sovereign territory historically, geographically and under international laws, stressing a territorial dispute over Dokdo doesn’t exist.

<30th August, 2012, NHK news>

Koishiro Genba, Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, responded to South Korea's refusal of Japan's proposal for both countries to submit their territorial claims to Takeshima in Shimane Prefecture to the International Court of Justice, stating that, "It is extremely disappointing. We will take appropriate steps, including submitting the case alone."

This is a good example of how the articles were significantly divided in an opposite way on the same matter following their respective national interest. Both articles reported by KBS and NHK; seem neutral by quoting a spokesman's comments (KBS) or politician's words (NHK). However, those reports are also focused on their national's perspective, with no explanation of the other country's claim.

3. De Facto

Since Dokdo is effectively occupied by the South Korean government, the comments cited by Japanese politicians are not neutral when they use such terms as "illegal occupation of Takeshima". It is difficult to argue the reporting itself lacks neutrality, but the news content of NHK seems to be more aggressive than KBS since KBS news continuously only highlights the phrase "Dokdo is our territory".

<29th August 2012, NHK news>

The House of Councillors in today's session passed a resolution about the visit to Takeshima in Shinmane Prefecture of South Korean President Lee Myung-bak.

*The resolution passed strongly criticized the visit to Takeshima by South Korean President Lee Myung-bak and demanded "that South Korea immediately end its **illegal occupation of Takeshima**"*

<11th and 13th August 2012, KBS news title>

President: "Dokdo is a place worth to sacrifice our lives to defend"

President: "Dokdo is our territory"

4. Relationship with Sources

News of the former President's impending visit was not released until Japanese Kyodo News reported the visit the night before it took place. An embargo was put in place preventing domestic Korean media from reporting on the President's visit for security reasons. The Blue House²⁴ press club members – all Koreans – agreed to honour the embargo. However, the embargo didn't apply to the foreign media, and the Kyodo News reported late on 9th August that Lee would make an unprecedented visit to the Islands, ahead of its embargoed time on 10th August.²⁵ As a result, the Koydo News report gave Tokyo several hours in advance to prepare its critical coverage to coincide with the president's visit. The Blue House strongly criticized Kyodo News for breaking the Blue House's internal rules by reporting the visit faster than any other media outlet. This event shows clearly how journalists act depending on their nationality when they cover a sensitive issue, which affects national interests.

²⁴ The **Blue House** is the executive office and official residence of the South Korean head of state, which is located in the capital city of Seoul.

²⁵ Fumikazu Yoshida, managing editor of Kyodo's News Department, said, " Based on information obtained from our credible news sources in Japan, we reported the issue."

2. Case: The Falklands' Referendum

(1) A Comparison of media coverage about the Islands in the UK and Argentina

In the run up to the Falklands referendum, which was held on 10th and 11th March 2013, the BBC and TV Pública both reported breaking news and covered a series of editorial news as well. These are the headlines of the ten top stories covered by BBC news on its website and TV Pública during the period of the referendum.

[Chart 2] The News Titles in BBC and TV Pública²⁶

Channel	Date (2013)	Title
BBC	06/03	How Argentines feel about the Falkland?
	07/03	Falklands resident stresses referendum importance
	09/03	Falkland Islands: Referendum due over territory
	10/03	Falkland referendum: Islanders vote on British Status
	10/03	Argentina: Falkland Islander's referendum 'meaningless'
	11/03	The people of the Falkland Island are voting
	12/03	Falkland referendum: Islanders vote to remain British
	14/03	UK welcomes election of new Pope Francis
	14/03	The senior Falkland Islands Catholic hopes Pope 'outside politics'
	18/03	Argentina's Fernandez raises Falklands with Pope Francis

²⁶ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/search/?q=falkland>

<http://www.tvPública.com.ar/tvPública/articulo?id=20771>

TV Pública	05/03	President, “Malvinas is our territory”
	11/03	Referendum in Malvinas
	12/03	The Falkland Islanders voted to remain a ‘British colony’
	12/03	Vision 7: The Referendum in Malvinas is illegal
	13/03	Ms. Cristina; “The referendum was a kind of parody”
	14/03	Argentine Veterans “the war was inhuman and an international crime”
	14/03	Both parties in Congress rejected the referendum
	15/03	National Congress confirms the sovereignty over the Malvinas Island.
	16/03	Argentine soldier denounces the crime in the Malvinas
	19/03	UNASUR; “Malvinas is Argentine sovereignty”

(2) Results and findings

Canal 7 (Channel 7), TV Pública is one of Argentina’s five nationwide television networks, owned, financed and operated by the Argentine government.²⁷ Generally speaking, the news reporting of TV Pública was slanted in favor of the Argentine government, whereas the BBC news tried to keep its distance from the UK’s government’s position by covering the Argentine’s viewpoint as well.

1. Historical Background

First of all, the BBC Television and TV Pública covered the event of the Falklands referendum, reporting twice on the same day. BBC TV news delivered one story from the Falkland Islands, but at the same time, another from Argentina. The BBC correspondent, Alastair Leithead’s report from Buenos Aires, offered a live

²⁷ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TV_P%C3%BAblica_Digital_\(Argentina\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TV_P%C3%BAblica_Digital_(Argentina))

coverage of how Argentinians thought about the referendum. In contrast, TV Pública news was emotional; **'British colony'** and **'illegal'** were non-neutral words. Also the newsreader emphasized that the referendum was not approved by the UN. By emphasizing this, the news implied that the islanders are still influenced by the British colonial power even though it doesn't formally exist anymore.

<10th March 2013, BBC news >

News Title: Falkland referendum: Islanders vote on British Status

"Reporter: The islanders decided to hold the vote in response to Argentine pressure for negotiations over sovereignty."

<10th March 2013, BBC news>

News Title: Argentina: Falkland Islander's referendum 'meaningless'

"Reporter: While the 1,600 or so eligible Falkland Islanders vote in the referendum, the government in Argentina calls it both "illegal" and "utterly meaningless".

<12th March 2013, TV Pública news>

Title: The Falkland Islanders voted to remain a 'British Colony'

"Reporter: Wrapped in the British flag and with British hats 99.8% of the inhabitants of the Malvinas islands voted in favour of being a colonial enclave of the UK. The British Prime Minister was pleased with the results which are not recognized by the UN."

<12th March 2013, TV Pública news>

Title: Vision 7: The Referendum in Malvinas is illegal

"Reporter: The British consultation in our Malvinas Islands is considered illegal by our country and it is also rejected by other countries' governments in the region."

2. Political/Public Influence

Secondly, the tone of TV Pública's news was less impartial; this is no doubt because TV Pública has been heavily influenced by the Argentine government's sources since it is owned and run by them. Also, people in Argentina are heavily engaged with the Las Malvinas issue. As former BBC correspondent for BBC Mundo, the Spanish-language site of the BBC, *Vladimir Hernandez* said; "Argentines want to hear that the Malvinas is their territory from the media, therefore, the Argentine journalists consider how to argue or defend the islands' conflicts issue rather than delivering news itself. This is the one of the main characteristics of the news coverage in Argentina. "(Interview, 14th May 2013)

The language used by TV Pública was not objective; newsreaders or reporters called the islands 'our islands' and never referred to the fact that they are also known, by the British, as the Falkland Islands. TV Pública also gave extensive coverage to the President's words about Malvinas. Cristina Fernandez was making fun of the referendum, calling the inhabitants "occupiers." Her words were far from neutral, and she was the only person quoted in the news coverage. Without covering the opposite actors or parties such as David Cameron or the islander's voice, the neutrality of news was often broken.

<13th March 2013, TV Pública news>

"President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner described the consultation carried out by London among the inhabitants of the Malvinas islands as a "kind of parody" and said also the referendum was something like a "consortium of occupiers(Okupas)"

On the contrary, BBC news was less aggressive and emotional compared to news of TV Pública. For example, on BBC World in Spanish, BBC correspondents in Mundo call 'Malvinas' at first, followed by 'the Falkland Islands' when they write about the issue. The BBC coverage shows that they try to reflect both sides of view by referring to both names, resisting both political and public pressures.



BBC News Sport Weather iPlayer TV

MUNDO

Noticias Última Hora América Latina Internacional Economía Tecnología Ciencia Salud S

Malvinas/Falklands: isleños votan por seguir siendo territorio británico

Redacción
BBC Mundo
Martes, 12 de marzo de 2013

Los habitantes de las islas Malvinas/Falklands votaron abrumadoramente a favor de mantener el estado de las islas como territorio británico de ultramar.

El 98.8% de los isleños que votaron en los dos días de referéndum lo hicieron a favor de seguir siendo británicos, mientras que se registraron tres votos en contra.

La participación del electorado fue de 92% entre una población elegible de casi 1.700 personas.

Dick Sawle, un integrante de la asamblea legislativa de las islas, dijo que era "un resultado absolutamente fenomenal"

El 98.8% de los isleños votó a favor de mantener la situación actual.

Contenido relacionado

3. De Facto

During the referendum, the intention of TV Pública news was to reiterate the illegality of the presence of the British in the islands. On the contrary, BBC news highlighted the fact that an Argentine company had developed an online game; it used the term 'invades' in the title in order to reclaim the sovereignty of the Falklands, but the news tone was less aggressive.

<12th March 2013, TV Pública news >

The British consultation in our Malvinas Islands is considered illegal by our country and it is also rejected by other governments in the region. Let's listen to the opinion of Ernesto Alonso, Head of the ex-combatants: "There is no doubt that there is a group of British citizens living in a territory, which belongs to our country."

²⁸http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/ultimas_noticias/2013/03/130308_ultnot_malvinas_falklands_resultados_votacion_jrg.shtml

<26th March 2013, BBC news >

Title: Argentina 'invades' Falklands in online game

An Argentine company has developed a map for the popular online game Counter Strike in which players fight British "terrorists" on the Falkland Islands. The game's release comes amid tension over the islands, as Argentina continues its diplomatic campaign for sovereignty.

4. Relationship with Sources

The BBC is comparatively independent from the elements that might influence its coverage; the historical background, political/public influence, or the de facto ownership of the islands. This is in large part a product of the BBC role as a public broadcaster which keeps its distance from sources and political/public pressures. This is reinforced by the BBC's strong editorial guidelines which are intended, among other things, to guard against BBC journalists forming too deep a relationship with sources who might have the potential to influence news coverage.

1.2.4 Editorial Integrity and Independence²⁹

*The BBC is independent of outside interests and arrangements that could undermine our editorial integrity. Our audiences should be confident that our decisions are not influenced by outside interests, political or commercial pressures, or **any personal interests**.*

On the other hand, TV Pública is affected the most among the four media outlets by all four influencing factors; but principally, the relationship between the media and its sources is the major factor which influences how the news was framed. Since TV Pública is the state-own broadcasting company, it seems that the news largely depends on the words of President. It weakens the objectivity of the news.

²⁹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines/page/guidelines-editorial-values-editorial-values>

Chapter 5 How do journalists maintain impartiality?

I. Editorial Differences of Four PSBs: BBC, TV Pública, KBS, NHK

1. Between Nationalism and Impartiality

Governments often encourage nationalism during conflicts. The nationalistic view is amplified by conservative politicians and government officials; consequently, it dominates public opinions. In these circumstances, it is extremely hard for journalists to keep a neutral position, rather than supporting the nationalist view. The BBC was criticised during the Falklands War in the early 1980s for referring to 'the British' rather than to 'our forces'. Peter Snow, a BBC journalist during the 1982 conflict, was accused of being 'treasonable' after he took a more impartial position in relation to the Falklands War. (Harris, 1983) He used such phrases as 'if we believe the British' and 'the only damage Britain admitted' during one programme when referring to the British government. There were also interviews with ordinary Argentinians and even with the Argentine military officers. According to one author, for the first time in British history, television could freely report the enemy's view of the war. (Harris, 1983) BBC reporting was considered treasonable by some members of the British government at the time. However, as a result this helped the BBC to achieve its worldwide excellent reputation for telling the truth. The BBC has continued to report wars or conflicts from a neutral point of view, even when British troops are involved.

2. Editorial Guidelines

In evaluating war reporting, Allan and Zelizer (Allan & Zelizer, 2005) have suggested that it can act as a "litmus test for journalism". Diplomatic conflicts, although they are not as critical as war situations, can also be a prism through which to evaluate whether news remains impartial and authoritative. Recently, diplomatic conflicts become core issues for journalists to cover. Therefore, as with

war reporting, many journalists need strict editorial guidelines when reporting not only conflict but also non-conflict situations.

(1) BBC

The BBC has well-established guidelines for the reporting of wars or conflicts in **Chapter 11** and during elections in **Chapter 10** of the BBC's Editorial Guidelines.³⁰

<War, Terror and Emergences

11. Introduction

The BBC has a special responsibility to its UK and international audiences when reporting conflict including wars, acts and planned acts of terror, sieges and emergencies. Large numbers of people across the world access our services for accurate news and information. They also expect us to help them make sense of events by providing context and impartial analysis and by offering a wide range of views and opinions.

At such times, when there may be conflicting information and opinions, and with reliable information hard to come by, we need to be scrupulous in applying our principles of accuracy and impartiality

<Reporting Overseas Elections

10.4.21

The principles of fairness and due impartiality that underlie our coverage of UK elections should also inform our election reporting in other countries. When we report elections overseas we may need to take into account the circumstances under which the particular election is being held, especially where serious questions are raised about the openness or fairness of the electoral process.

Additional issues may arise when BBC content is aimed at an audience within the country where an election is taking place. We owe a special responsibility to audiences who are about to vote. We may need to consider the timing of the re-transmission on international services

³⁰ This quote is taken from the BBC's editorial guidelines: see <http://www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines/page/guidelines-war-introduction>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/guidelines>

of programmes originally made for the UK audience. The closer to the election date, the greater the need for care. If it is considered that a programme could have an undue and unfair influence on the election, then we should delay transmission until after polling.

Legal Issues and Overseas Elections

10.4.22

UK electoral law does not apply to elections outside the UK, but other countries may have specific laws applying to broadcasting during their elections. Where BBC content is broadcast specifically to that country there may be legal issues to consider.

In some countries, legal election requirements may come into conflict with the BBC's fundamental editorial principles, especially those of fairness and impartiality. In such cases, the BBC will maintain the editorial principles in its output even if that means the local broadcaster refuses to transmit the BBC content or service. This is particularly important for BBC World Service, BBC World and BBC Online, which all reach overseas audiences

(2) TV Pública

In analysing reporting during the Falkland Islands' referendum, the language was far from neutral. It seems that the intention of the news programme was to reiterate the illegality of the referendum, which made the news reporting biased. I found that TV Pública had difficulties keeping their objectivity, because TV Pública was influenced by the four elements of historical background, public or political pressures, de facto ownership and their relationship with sources. Therefore, even if TV Pública has proper editorial guidelines which broadcasters should follow, it would in all likelihood be extremely hard for TV Pública's journalists to be impartial and act as a watch-dog towards the Argentine government. However, since the news analysis was based on a short period of the referendum, it would be wrong to pre-judge all news covered by TV Pública and say that it is partial.

(3) KBS

KBS released its production guidelines in 2010, which provide general guidance for journalists and editors to refer to when they are making a programme or news. Nonetheless, there is no specific editorial guideline for covering conflict issues. Cheol young, Kum, who is a KBS Reporter, Deputy Head of Politics and Foreign Affairs, pointed out that KBS should revise their production guidelines. He has his own guidelines when he deals with Dokdo issues; "KBS news should not be played as a peacemaker to solve the diplomatic conflicts by being impartial, but at the same time, KBS news must not be a troublemaker by delivering words that could stimulate nationalistic feeling among Korean people. In order not to bring unnecessary conflicts between two nations, reporters should try to cover all parties in their reporting. For example, I try to do my best to provide not only the quotations of Japanese officers but also the contexts of why they are saying something in that way in order to make the audience understand better what is going on there."(Interview, 15th May)

(4) NHK

NHK also does not provide well-specified editorial guidelines related to diplomatic conflicts. However, based on NHK's general guidelines, journalists at NHK are required to be objective and to keep their distance from tabloid sensationalism. Ryoji Ito, a former correspondent in Seoul and currently a deputy editor in the International News Department at NHK said, "Journalists who dealt with the South Korean President's visit tried to deliver both sides' points of view even if there were strong hostile feelings toward President Lee Myung-bak's visit to Takesima."

Recently, after Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe took office, chauvinistic voices are growing riding the wave of the right-wing trend in the Japanese society. NHK is not excessively influenced by nationalistic pressures such as the public or government; however, NHK reflects public opinions more than it did in the past. Ryoji suggested that NHK reporters should bear in mind that the Dokdo/Takeshima issue is not only a territorial dispute;

“The Dokdo issue is recognized as a historical legacy in Korea, on the contrary, Japanese people are likely to see Takeshima as a territorial issue. We should be aware of the perspective differences between the two nations, therefore, new reports reflect both sides in order to be objective” (Interview, 2nd July)

II. How the Media conduct themselves in Diplomatic Conflicts

An objective point of view based on the facts is one of the best ways in which the media can best guarantee truthful and fair reporting. The media outlets especially from involved countries should avoid provocative wording and keep the neutral writing of the names of disputed region. Sian Kevill, former director BBC World News and editor of BBC's Newsnight programme, sets out some of the core journalistic values underpinning impartiality.

"Journalists must actively seek out and weigh the relevant arguments on any issue and present them fairly and without bias. In order to be impartial, language usage is essential. Journalist should try to find out the neutral terminology rather than choose emotional phrases. If a journalist had a well-balanced view, he or she wouldn't use any emotional word. It is not impossible to write more persuadable news coverage without using emotional words. Sometimes, neutral and unbiased terms make the article more reliable. For example, the IRA (Irish Republican Army) is often described as a terrorist group. From the British point of view, it might be true. However, do the Irish think the same way? Absolutely, they think the opposite way. Therefore, to achieve balanced reporting, a journalist should carefully choose words which are not influenced by the government or politicians and put the position of the other side as well. It will be difficult, but it might be also helpful to take a balance when they face up to conflict issues." (Interview, 16th July)

Media outlets also must be careful not to become a mouthpiece for the propaganda of politicians, the principal actors or interest groups if they are to be impartial. (Oh Ryong, 2013) Territorial arguments are largely heated by nationalism; they are also manipulated by the nationalists and politicians who often use the issues to fan nationalist passions, which are sure vote-winners for

them. Therefore, public service media outlets should try to report both sides, and try not to take sides, covering as many viewpoints as they can, so that audiences are able to make their own decision on the issues. In order to achieve a neutral position, consulting a third party's point of view through other media reports from those who are not involved can be helpful to get a larger picture of the ongoing disputes.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Territorial conflicts that are historically deep-rooted between nations are as evident as ever around the world. The Dokdo/Takeshima dispute was further reignited by the visit of former South Korean President to the islands in 2012. Likewise, the Falklands referendum in 2013 heightened the diplomatic tension between the UK and Argentina. These two examples underline an important role for the public media. This study has been focused on how Public Service Broadcasters (PSBs), who should serve the public interest by providing highly well-balanced content, should deliver context and understanding when the issues are related to the perceived national interest.

In the case of Dokdo, KBS was more influenced by public and political pressures than NHK; the historical background that Korea was a colony of Japan between 1905 and 1945 makes KBS journalists sometimes lose their impartial footing even though Korea effectively controls the islands.

On the other hand, in the Falklands referendum case, the BBC tried to keep its distance from public and political pressures according to its well-developed editorial guidelines. The language used was neutral and the opinions of both sides were covered by domestic journalists and correspondents in Argentina.

This study has mainly focused on the use of language. In order to achieve the objective reporting, journalists in PSBs tried to use accurate, balanced words despite the pressures. However, in practice, their objectivity varied according to editorial guidelines. The more refined the guideline they had, the more fairness they showed in their reporting.

Indeed, strong and usable editorial guidelines are a crucial and important tool for every PSB seeking to fulfil its core mission of serving the public's interests. Editorial guidelines make journalists look beyond the claims of populist and nationalistic politicians and educate the public about the genuine issues and history of disputes. It is also the role of the media to provide the population with an understanding of the other side of the story; for example, KBS should have provided more coverage of Japanese perspectives and explain why the Japanese keep insisting on the sovereignty of Dokdo. This might lead Koreans to understand better the historical background and react in a more rational way instead of being so highly emotional about this issue.

In summary, to maintain objectivity, PSB's and other services which are designed to serve the public, rather than the nationalistic interest, should be responsible for developing concrete guidelines which protect journalists from improper political pressure and prevent them from being used as mouthpieces for the government.

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